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Barbara Whittle

from her Mummy

1934.

Ethel Cottace
from dear young Miss

Dora Ellen Watney
(Auntie Effie's book)

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GOOD LITTLE HEARTS

THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY BAZAAR

a prize for Spelling.

Christmas 1902.

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Salisbury W

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GOOD LITTLE HEARTS

THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY BAZAAR

BY AUNT FANNY

AUTHOR OF 'NIGHTCAPS,' ETC.

'I love God and little children.'—RICHTER.

VOLUME I.

EDINBURGH
EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS

1870

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO
MARY HELEN
AND
ALEXANDER,
TWO "GOOD LITTLE HEARTS,"
WHO LIVE AT THE GRANGE, IN EDINBURGH.

MOTTO FOR ALL GOOD LITTLE HEARTS.

“Do all the good you can,
In all the ways you can,
To all the people you can,
In every place you can,
At all the times you can,
As long as ever you can.”

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GOOD LITTLE HEARTS.



PART I.

AUNT FANNY had gone into the country. She felt tired and not very well. All she wanted to do was to sit under a great elm-tree, to watch the beautiful hills, and count the white summer clouds that sail so softly along the sky, and to laugh at the little chickens kicking up a dust and scratching at the gravel.

One bright morning she was doing this to her heart's content, when she got a letter. Here it is.

FRED'S LETTER.

DEAR AUNT FANNY,—

I hope you are very well. Last Monday was my birthday. Mamma and papa gave me an

exquisite book of travels, and a lot of fireworks; and grandpa gave me a beautiful portfolio full of paper, pens, a little inkstand, and a splendid little knife. This is some of the paper. I am going to be quite sentimental, and write a piece of poetry. When it is done I will send it to you.

Such fun as we had on my birthday. We played soldiers. Peter put a long goose's feather in his cap, and I wore a little wooden tub on my head, just for fun. Peter has a magnificent cannon, and we fired it off all day long. We let little Bob fire it just as often as we did. He was very careful to stand as far from it as possible, and he did look so pleased when it went off! But the night was best of all! We really nearly went out of our wits with joy to see the Roman candles and sky-rockets! I wish somebody had a birthday every day,—don't you, Aunt Fanny? People can be so much happier when they are making a noise.

But next to making a noise, the most delightful thing is a first-rate story-book. Our "Popgun" stories are splendid; but we cannot get them from the printer for ever so long; and oh, dear Aunt Fanny, if you would only send us some more!—just to keep us good. You know they will make us better than dozens of birch-rods! Indeed, your stories are the very best cure for the very worst attacks of naughtiness. Now, don't you see, Aunt Fanny, it is really your *duty* to send some new stories, for which you shall receive nine times more love than ever from

Your loving nephew,

FRED.

The rest is from Sophie.

SOPHIE'S LETTER.

I wanted Fred to add a postscript for me, but he says boys never write postscripts, and girls always do, and I must write it myself. We are very

happy here in the country, but we miss you so much, dear Aunt Fanny. What made you go so far away among those Berkshire mountains? * Are there any nice children in the house with you? If there are, I wish we could know something about them. We are in a great farm-house, half-a-mile from the village, and five miles from the railway. There are no other children in the house besides ourselves; and, what is worse, little brother Bob has gone to stay with Aunt Kate, because she wanted him so much. When we first came, there was such a dear little nest of robin-redbreasts in a tree directly opposite the window of my room. It was almost hidden by the leaves, but we could just see three little bills sticking up, wide open, every time the mother redbreast came near them.

One morning the mother left the nest, and sat on a bough near by. She looked so very important that we were sure something was going to

* Beautiful hills in the State of Massachusetts.

happen. So there was; for cock-robin, her husband, perched himself beside her, and began to sing in the most lovely manner. Oh dear, how he did sing!

All at once a wee downy bird hopped up on the edge of the nest, and its little head twisted and turned in every direction; then it opened its wings and lifted one leg high up. We kept just as still as mice, watching, for now we knew that it was going to try to fly. Then cock-robin sang sweeter than ever. He seemed to be singing—

“Now, my darling, now, now!

Try, try, try!

You can mount on wings as well

As I, I, I.”

His head went quickly this way and that; he looked up at the blue sky, and down at the green grass; he trilled away with all his might and main, when the little one, making a great flutter-

ing and fuss, and saying "wee, wee," in a quivering voice, ventured off.

The mother gave a quick hop of delight, and chirruped in the most encouraging manner: and the bird really did try to get to her.

But oh, poor little thing! it was so frightened that it went wildly down and almost fell on the grass, just at the very moment that the two others had perched themselves on the edge of the nest, and were making up their minds to begin; when looking down sideways, and seeing their little brother hopping about in the grass, they lost their balance, and down they fell, too, crying "wee, wee! wee, wee!" in the most dismal tones.

Then away flew the mother to her three poor little children, and they all had a good twitter and cry together.

Then cock-robin sang in the most coaxing way to comfort them, and they stood on one leg and

tried to get up to him ; but it was no use trying ; they were too weak,—and we were so sorry !

But what *do* you think ? We leaned out of the window to see them better, and there on top of the hedge was the cat ! c-r-o-u-c-hing down,—her eyes gleaming, her tail slowly waving to and fro, her fur rising on her back, just ready to spring. Quick as lightning, Peter pulled off one of his boots and threw it at her, while Kitty, Lou, and I dashed down-stairs and out under the trees.

Poor cock-robin and his wife flew up on a bough, and made a sorrowful twittering, for they were not sure we were friends. Then I told Kitty and Lou to watch with all their eyes, to keep the cat away, while I went in and begged the farmer's wife to let me have an empty cage I had seen in the old garret, hanging on a nail fastened to one of the big brown rafters.

She said “yes” so kindly that I quite loved her, and I hurried out with it into the garden.

The poor little birds seemed to have their downy feathers all turned the wrong way ; their heads looked quite bald, and they were limping about and hopping, and crying “wee, wee !” very dismally. So I said,—

“Kitty, let’s put them in this cage, and leave the door open, and set it in the lowest bough ; then that horrid old cat can’t get at them.”

So we caught them just as gently and softly as ever we could,—the old ones flying round and round us, and twittering in the greatest distress, as if they were saying, “Oh, *do* let our little children alone !” and this made Lou so sorry that she clasped her hands and spoke to them tenderly,—“Don’t cry, little robin-redbreasts, please don’t ; we’ll soon have them all comfortable for you ; we love your little children.”

When we got them in the cage, Kitty ran for Sam, the farmer’s boy, to bring a ladder. “Make haste !” she said, and he came so kindly and so

fast that the poor parents were now quite sure that their children were going to be killed, and they were almost screaming with anguish.

“Do make haste!” we said, and he put the ladder against the tree, took the cage and placed it securely in a fork, and came quickly down. Then we all went away,—Sam with his ladder, and we up to our window to watch.

The dear little things! Would you believe it? the father and mother seemed to understand it at once. They flew off for a moment, and then came back, each with food, and there they fed their children all day long, just as nicely as could be.

The next day the dear little robins tried again to fly. This time they succeeded beautifully, and soon after they all flew away; and we were so sorry.

Now, Aunt Fanny, only see what a long letter! with a story in it too! Don't you think you would like to send us some in return? Please do, and

tell us about all the little girls you have met in Pittsfield.*

(Peter writes)—“Oh, please do, Aunt Fanny.”

(Kitty writes)—“Please do, *dear* Aunt Fanny.”

(Lou *prints*, for she does not know how to write)
—“PLEASE DO, DEAR DARLING AUNT FANNY.”

(Sophie)—Here we are all coaxing you, and, what's more, we have been to the post-office, which is kept in a corner of the grocer's shop,—isn't that funny? And the fat old lady with a wig, who takes all the letters out of a battered old leather bag, says you can send stories ever so long, and she won't charge anything for keeping them until we come after them. What a good old thing! isn't she?

Now, Aunt Fanny, you mean to let us hear from you immediately,—and so just on this spot

 O  is a kiss from

Your loving niece,

SOPHIE.

* A town in Massachusetts.

Here was some unexpected work to be done ! for how could Aunt Fanny resist such earnest pleading ? She had read the letter, lying on a comfortable couch drawn close to the window, where, by only taking the trouble to lift her eyes, she could see half-a-dozen hills right opposite, their graceful slopes covered with fields of waving grain, and crowned with dark woods. Oh, it was so delicious to do nothing ! and the mountain-air made her so sleepy ! She would not take the trouble even to ask a question, for fear she might have to answer some, and she really seemed in a fair way of dozing all day, as well as sleeping all night.

And so before she decided what answer to send to this dear, coaxing letter, she had a serious talk with herself, something like this :—

“ Aunt Fanny, you are a lazy woman.”

“ But I came up here on purpose to be lazy.”

“ Is not that very selfish ?”

“ But I *want* to be selfish this summer.”

“Then the children will tell you, you are not doing your duty.”

“Then I’ll cork up my ears with cotton.”

“Then the children will not believe that you love them.”

“Oh, dear me ! but I *do* love them.”

“No, you don’t !”

“Yes, I do,—*dearly* !”

“*You only love yourself.*”

Upon hearing her conscience whispering this dreadful thing, Aunt Fanny bounced up, as if she had been lying upon pins and needles, gave one lazy sigh, seized pen, ink, and paper, and wrote this answer.

AUNT FANNY’S ANSWER.

MY DARLING POPGUN CHILDREN,—

Your letter created quite a riot in my heart, for I did so want to be lazy and do nothing, while at

the same time I knew it was wicked to waste so much precious time.

So laziness had a hard battle with conscience, and I am thankful to say that conscience won; and I am going to begin immediately to tell you all the news.

When I first came here to look for lodgings for the summer, I stayed at the Berkshire Hotel. We arrived just at tea-time. As I got out of the carriage at the door, one of the very brightest pair of eyes I ever saw was looking at me. I said to myself, "What a lovely little girl! I *do* wish I knew her!"—but when I looked again she was gone.

After tea I was sitting in the parlour, talking with a beautiful lady who lived in the house, and who was, as Alice said, a "relation-in-law" of mine. Some one came in at the door holding a bouquet of flowers,—and there was the very same little girl with the bright eyes whom I had seen when I first arrived. She came quickly to me smiling and

blushing, and said, "How do you do, Aunt Fanny? I have brought you some flowers, and mamma will be here in a few minutes."

"Then 'mamma' must be the dear friend whom I knew when I was a girl, and to whom I wrote to say I was coming?"

"Yes, Aunt Fanny; and when I told her it would be very awkward for me to come here alone, she said it would be no such thing, because you loved children dearly."

"So I do," I answered, kissing her, "and I am beginning to love you already."

We chatted away as if we had known each other for ever so long. Then her mother came in, and I found her just the same charming, bright spirit which I remembered so well,—with the most winsome smile and cordial manner in the world; and my heart felt warm, and my face glowed, as we talked over olden times.

Presently another fairy girl came skipping into

the room, with more lovely flowers, and Anna running to her with a little joyful exclamation, brought her up to me, saying, "This is Carrie, Aunt Fanny."

"Is this the Carrie who wrote me a sweet little letter?" I asked.

"The very same one."

"She's a darling," I said, and I kissed her, and she gave me her flowers, and we all sat down close together, and were just as comfortable and happy as possible.

Then Carrie's mamma came in, and I fell in love with her at once, because she had what I think is so beautiful, long light curls, of a pale gold colour, and tender blue eyes, and a frank, friendly manner. Ah! I have since found that I was perfectly right in falling in love with her, for she is such a dear good mother to Carrie, trying to make her happy in every possible way; and I am sure Carrie loves her a thousand times better, and minds her five

thousand times quicker, than she would a harsh, tyrannical mother, walking about all day with a cat-o'-nine-tails. Such mothers ought to be made drummers in a regiment, where they could spend all their time in beating.

Some other darlings (little ones) came in afterwards. I got kisses and loving glances from every one of them; and so my first evening in a strange place, instead of being lonely and forlorn, was perfectly delightful.

The next day we went to Lenox* to look for lodgings. I thought I should prefer being there, but every house had every room engaged, except the dismal ones, and they would not do for me.

Presently we came to a large white house, fresh and clean, with "Hotel" on the front: but the words were only faintly to be seen; they appeared to have been only recently painted over; great elm-

* A town in Massachusetts.

trees shaded the windows, and every breath of the summer air was sweet with fragrance.

“Oh, this is the very place for me !” I exclaimed.
“Let’s try here.”

There was a door opening directly into a room on the side of the house, and I could see books, plenty of them, and a writing-table. Yes, this was certainly the house for me, I thought.

Up the steps we marched, when from the back of the house came a lazy-looking man, with his hat put far back on his head. This is the way he looked.

“What do you want, marm ?” he asked.



“I am looking for rooms,” I said, very politely ;
“and this seems such a very delightful place that I *do* hope you will be able to accommodate me. I have tried everywhere else without success, but I shall not regret it if I can be suited here.”

The man grinned, gave himself a kind of lazy stretch, pushed his hat up on one side, till it looked as if it sat upon his left ear, and drawled out, "We can take you in, marm, but, once in, we shan't let you out so easy."

This was an odd speech! It made me feel queer. I said to myself, "This man must be cracked;" but I said to him, "Why, what on earth do you mean?"

The man grinned again, picked up a chip, took a knife out of his pocket, and began to cut it before he answered,—“Why, marm, you're wanting rooms in the JAIL.”

“O—h!” I screamed. “Did you ever! What *have* I come to! trying so hard to get into jail!” Then we laughed till we nearly fell down; and walking back, we saw that all the windows in the rear were barred with iron, and that sobered me, and made me sad in a moment. To think that such a lovely place, with such grand hills to look

at, such beautiful trees overshadowing it, and the little birds darting about and singing among the branches, should hold only wicked people! Oh, was it not a pity? But then I thought that perhaps the sweet pure influence of such surroundings might make the prisoners resolve to lead better lives when they got out, and that thought quite comforted me.

When we returned to Pittsfield, I found that my old friend had taken me, and all my luggage, to her house and heart, and meant to have a tea-party; and *such* a splendid tea-party as we had! I wished there had been half-a-dozen of *me*, there were so many delicious things to enjoy. I really thought the table would break down under the load of dainties; while sitting round it were such pleasant, charming people, that I began to think my friend had fallen heir to Aladdin's lamp, and everything and everybody had risen out of the floor by enchantment.

We had hardly finished our tea when a carriage drove up to the door, and a pleasant voice was asking for me.

I hurried into the parlour, and there was a lady in mourning, the sister of a friend in New York. Although I had never seen her before, she was so cordial and friendly that I seemed to *grow* to her at once.

“Come,” she said, in a hearty way, “put on your shawl, and let me take you out to our quaint old place; I will not keep you but a little while.”

Here was a new sunbeam added to the rest. I immediately wanted dreadfully to go to the quaint old house, and I skipped up to her like a frisky *old* child, and said, “Oh, dear, yes! I should like to see it of all things!” And in two minutes Anna’s eldest sister, my daughter, and I, were in the carriage with my new friend, dashing off in style to the quaint old house,—for everybody

drives like the wind in Pittsfield. Yankee horses are decidedly "fast."

In a very few minutes we had driven out of town, through the grounds, and up to the house. A great brass knocker was on the door, and in the fading daylight, for the sun had set, I fancied it was grinning ferociously at me, as if to say, "Knock my head, if you dare!" So I never knocked at all, but we went in to a grand wide hall. It seemed to contain a perfect museum of curious, beautiful things. On one side were the most singular pictures and other things from China; a large shelf hanging on the wall, ornamented with autumn leaves; stags' horns, and many other strange articles, of which I did not know even the names; on the other, was a perfect ship completely rigged, with guns sticking out of the portholes and all sails set, ready to come down with a vengeance upon their enemies. And really it was one of the most enviable possessions the world could afford

to a brave boy. Don't you wish you had it, Fred ?

Directly below this ship, sitting in a comfortable arm-chair, was the very largest doll I ever saw in my life, dressed in pink, and smiling with the utmost good-nature. Don't you wish you had *her*, Kitty and Lou ?

On the right was the library. Two wise owls stared at us from the top of the bookcase ; while beautiful paintings and all manner of elegant ornaments embellished the easels and tables.

All at once I exclaimed, " Why, here's an old mammy, bless her heart ! " and I pulled out of a corner a great black doll, which looked exactly like my old black nurse in Charleston. Her clothes were all knitted from head to foot, and I believe her face was knitted too ; but I will not be sure that I remember rightly, for we had to look at everything in such great haste. In one of her old black legs was a *bullet-hole*, where the Southerners

had shot her when she was running away head-over-heels from slavery.

Really and truly, it was only a small pin-hole in the wood, but her little mistress made believe that the Southerners had shot her.

And now you are wondering who her mistress was. It was Annie,—mind ! not *Anna*. Annie lived in this quaint old house with her dear aunt. Her mamma went to heaven not very long ago, and for many weeks the little, tender, delicate girl wept and mourned, and refused to be comforted.

But her good kind aunt does everything in the wide world to make her happy, and now, though Annie never will forget her lovely mamma, the smiles have come back to her sweet young face.

Presently we went out by the back-door, and stood on a wide piazza. “Look up !” said Annie’s aunt. We lifted our eyes, and in an instant a thrill of delight passed through me ! We were standing under the glorious Stars and Stripes ! for upon the

great roof over our heads had been painted OUR FLAG! Was it not a good idea? Have *your* glorious flag painted on the roof of *your* piazza.

Then we went in again, mounted the broad elegant stairs, built like those of the grand old Hancock House* in Boston, which has lately been most shamefully destroyed. The upper hall was just as wide and handsome as the lower,—and here were Annie's little library of books, some pictures, a sewing-machine, and some more curiosities. It was *such* a pleasant place for sewing and reading! All the rooms were large and handsome, and each one had traditional stories about the fine gentlemen who lived in them long before the Revolutionary War. I looked around with awe, and a little fear. Fancy those old fellows dressed in sky-blue coats, with brass buttons, nankeen trousers, yellow waist-

* This was a fine old mansion—where many noblemen, and one Prince of Wales, had been entertained before the Revolutionary War.

coats, cocked hats, and great bunches of seals dangling at their watch-chains, sitting in these quaint old wainscotted rooms, drinking wine, and chatting about what the king and his Parliament might be doing, for in those old days they were all ruled by the king and his Parliament.

When we came down-stairs, we stopped for a moment in the parlour. It was a charming room. An old-fashioned but most graceful paper was on the walls, quite filled with pictures of birds, baskets of flowers, and twining wreaths; the high wooden mantelpiece was most exquisitely carved, and the furniture was in perfect harmony with the room. The subtle, delicate taste of Annie's mamma had controlled this last. Nothing was out of keeping, —all was massive, graceful, and in the best possible taste.

And now it was quite dark, for the moon would not rise until late. Back we drove in the twinkling light of the myriad stars. I insisted on sitting with

the coachman, so as to get the very best view of the country. He was a nice, modest young fellow, but I coaxed him to talk to me about his horses, of which he seemed very proud. He told me their names, and he touched them up gently, once or twice, to show me what fine trotters they were.

We were bowling along famously over the smooth road, when a great dog came leaping beside us. He had dashed out of the gate with us, and seemed perfectly delighted to have a run.

“Go back!” said his mistress, in a severe tone.
“Go home immediately!”

The poor fellow stopped, cast an imploring glance at us, wagged his tail, and took a few steps forward.

“Go back!” was the order. There was no help for it; so the good, obedient dog turned round and trotted home.

We soon arrived at my friend's house, and in two minutes I was comfortably seated on a sofa in the

pleasant parlour, with four of my darlings around me,—Anna, Carrie, Annie, and a dear, shy little girl whose name was Mary.

Then I was told by all four at once—their little tongues running like a mill-stream, their eyes sparkling—about a wonderful bazaar which was to be held in two weeks for the benefit of the Christian Commission.* This Fair was to be given entirely by the children, and they were so busy they did not know what to do.

“Oh, Aunt Fanny! Can’t you stay for the Fair?” said Anna.

“Ah, do!” coaxed Carrie, giving me a loving squeeze.

“Oh, yes, do, do!” cried Annie, jumping up and sitting down again with a bounce.

* This was composed of a band of good men, who devoted themselves to helping the poor wounded soldiers in the hospitals during the late dreadful war in the United States.

The shy little one gave me a smiling, wishful look, but she was too bashful to speak.

“ Oh, I wish I could,” I said, “ but I must go home to-morrow ; perhaps I can send you something to sell.”

“ Oh, what will it be, Aunt Fanny ? ” they asked.

“ Well, how would you like a little story in verse ? I wrote it for a great Fair in New York, and it was liked so much, that since the Fair or bazaar, more copies have been printed. If I can get them, I will send you a dozen.”

“ Oh, thanks ! ” they cried, and I got some good kisses for this trifle.

Then I went to talk with the very brightest, smartest, wittiest old lady I ever met. She was Anna's grandmamma, and if it is true that people grow fat with laughing, I am sure I must have gained a pound that night. She said so many funny things that my sides ached, and I was quite

in a glow ; and with all that she was so kind and cheery, and such a true Christian, that it was like resting from the troubles of this world to sit beside her. But the next morning, when my daughter had gone out for a walk, and I was alone with her in her own room, and she sat with her work-basket, —while on the table was the Holy Bible, her guide and comforter, and all round the walls hung pictures drawn by a sweet, loving grandchild older than Anna,—I enjoyed it still more ; she told me so many delightful stories about things which happened to her when she was young.

Presently she said, “ Fanny, why don't you try to get lodgings here ? It is just as pleasant as Lenox. I think it pleasanter, because it is my home.”

This was a new and bright idea ! and, putting on my hat, I set off with Anna and Carrie, who had a holiday from school on my account,—which was a very particular compliment, I can tell you.

We hunted and hunted, without any success; then we went to see Carrie's dear mamma, who lived in a large brown house, with a semicircle of grand old elms leading to it,—the trees and house together making it the most beautiful place in the town. There I met my daughter; and we had a most delightful visit, and were favoured, among other pleasant incidents, with a sight of the things Carrie and her sisters had been making for the Fair. Such a quantity of them! I was surprised!

Then we went away and took a long walk to find another house. It was very clean, and the rooms were large and cheerful-looking; but I thought, "Oh, dear me! if I am so far off, I shall never see my friends, I'm afraid." So I gave that up.

On our way back, on looking down a side street, we saw some children playing hide-and-seek.

"Just look what fun they are having," said I, as I stopped to watch them.

“Why, Annt Fanny,” cried Anna and Carrie, “that’s our school! and there’s Annie running after that little boy. Shall we tell her to come to you?”

Before I could say “Oh, no, don’t disturb her at her game,” Anna sprang away, and in a moment more, two breathless, fluttering little figures were at my side, laughing and jumping, and just as happy as the frolicking little singing-birds in the trees.

I gave Annie a kiss, and she seemed to fly back to her schoolmates. I never *did* see any children run so fast as Annie, Carrie, and Anna. I only wish I could do exactly the same.

Then we went back to my kind friend’s house to dinner. We had heard of one more place, and after dinner we hurried out again. It was quite near, and there, after going all over town, I found just what I wanted close at hand. How often this happens. You will give yourself an immense deal of trouble to do a thing, or to find a thing, and at

the very last moment you will discover that what you want is right under your nose.

“Ting, ting, ting, ting-a-ling, ling, ling!” went the railway bell. “Oh, dear,” I cried, “I must go.” The children ran, and I ran and jogged and tumbled back to my friend’s house, got my carpet-bag, which was all ready, said good-bye for two weeks, and almost flew for the station, which fortunately was very near,—and in three minutes more the whistle gave that unearthly screech, and I was whirling home. The last sweet sight I had of Pittsfield were my darlings, Anna and Carrie, with their round hats off, waving them high above their heads, bidding me good-bye.

And now, after the two weeks, I am back again where I meant to be such an idle Aunt Fanny, but I’m glad you won’t let me. So here is this long letter for a beginning; and I will set about telling you how Alice came to give the funny little bazaar you attended; and after that, all the “good little

hearts" I come across I will catch, and write their histories for your benefit. Ah! you don't know how many Scottish and English "good little hearts" I have found already. Next year I shall tell some stories about them.

Meanwhile, my darlings, let us all try to purify our own hearts; let our daily and nightly prayer be, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Do you know that in the blessed Bible there is an express answer to that prayer? It is this:—

"A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

Ah! what a comfort such a loving promise is. Never fail to go to your dear Saviour in all your troubles, and especially when you have done wrong, for "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

In about two weeks from now you may expect the first of the stories about my "Good Little Hearts." Meanwhile love and pray for

Your affectionate

AUNT FANNY.

PART II.

FRED AT THE POST-OFFICE.

FRED went to the post-office. The mail came in, in the afternoon, just at sunset, but he was in such haste that he was about half-an-hour too early.

“Any letters?” he asked, bouncing in at the door.

The fat old lady with the wig, who sat all day behind the counter, knitting, glanced up at him, rubbed her hands upon her knees, and then she said, “Look here, little four-foot-nothing; I advise you to set down and whistle for the mail, for it’s not come.”

She looked good-humoured,—as all fat people do,—when she said this; so Fred laughed in the midst of his disappointment, and hitching himself

up on top of a sugar-barrel, began thrumming his heels against the side of it.

Presently a poor-looking little woman came in. She appeared as though she had been crying, and she heaved a great sigh as she said, "*Miss Marble*, can you spare me a pint of milk for my baby? My cow died this morning."

"Oh, my stars! did she?" said fat Mrs. Marble, and in her sympathy she pushed her wig up on the side of her head and left an inch or two of bald pate showing over her left ear. Fred was very near laughing at this, but he screwed up his mouth and tried to whistle, while the fat old lady went on,—"*Look here*; I'm real sorry, I am! and just wait till I find my shoes, and you shall have the milk."

She tumbled in a heap off the chair, dived under the counter, fished out a dismal-looking pair of carpet-shoes, put them on, and shuffled away to get the milk.

Back she came in a moment, with a large pitcher full of milk, and a bottle of medicine.

“Look here, your baby’s teething, a’n’t she?” she asked.

“Oh, yes; and she frets herself and me almost into holes with her crying. Polly, the miller’s daughter, is sitting on a log in the field, trying to get the poor little thing to sleep now.”

“Well, give her a teaspoonful of this when you put her to bed, and she will sleep like a kitten.”

The poor woman thanked her over and over, and hurried away.

“Well,” thought Fred, “her name may be Marble, but her heart isn’t, that’s certain. What a good old toad!”



POLLY SINGING TO THE POOR
BABY.

“I wonder what killed old Brindle?” said Mrs. Marble, as she scrambled back to her seat behind the counter, and kicked off her shoes. She looked so comical, pausing to consider, with her wig on one side, and one eye turned up like a magpie’s, that Fred gave one of those bursting laughs, with his hand clapped on his mouth.

“Look here, my young chicken,” said the old lady, sharply, “what are you laughing at?”

Fred tossed his hat up in the air and caught it again, to hide his confusion, and then said, by way of changing the subject, “I know a very fine epitaph on the death of a cow named Brindle.”

“Well, my young infant, get up on the bar’l and say it,” said the old lady, pulling her wig down and looking quite good-humoured again.

Fred declined standing on the barrel, but he sat on it, kicking his feet softly against the

side to keep time, as he recited this interesting ditty :—

“ Old Brindle’s dead, that good old cow,
We ne’er shall see her more ;
She had a pair of legs behind,
And just the same before.

“ Oh ! she was gentle as a dove,
And knew no base design ;
She had two horns her head above,
Like any other kine.

“ She had two eyes set in her face,
Her nose was full in view ;
She made no noise on rainy days,
As other cattle do.

“ In winter she was fed on hay,
We cut the fodder fine ;
She gave eight quarts of milk a-day,
On Sunday she gave nine.

“ And just at sunset every night
 She came home without fail ;
She never felt disposed to fight,
 And ne’er kicked o’er the pail.

“ She sought her friends ’mong other cows,
 With whom she won esteem
She never kicked up any rows,
 But always gave good cream.

“ Oh ! she was generous to a fault,
 Betrayed no idle fears ;
She never yet refused the salt ;
 She wore a pair of ears.

“ With goodness was her heart endowed,
 With teeth her mouth was set,
And all the other cattle bowed
 Whenever her they met.

“ Now that ‘ she’s gone ’ to her long home,
 To mourn we ever shall,
For everybody said she was
 A fine old animal.”

Just at this moment a great brawny man came into the store. His face and bare arms were as black as a chimney-sweep's. He was the village blacksmith, and the fat old lady's son. His name was Gamaliel, but everybody called him "Gam."

He poured some water into a great tin basin and began to rub and scrub his face and hands; he scrubbed and rubbed, and never left off for five minutes,—Fred watching the operation with the deepest interest.

"Look here, Gam," said his mother; "seems to me you want *hot* water for all that there smudge."

"Wall, I think you're abeout right," he drawled. "Any in the biler?"

"Just wait till I get on my shoes, and I'll go see." Down she tumbled in a heap, as before, fished up her shoes, put them on, and waddled out into the kitchen. Presently she returned with a great steaming jug. "There!" she said, "it's a'most red-hot; so be keerful."

Gam was used to red-hot things. Throwing away the cold water, he poured the whole of the other in the basin, and plunged his face into it. Fred drew his breath, and eagerly watched, fully expecting that the blacksmith's skin would peel off; but after plenty of soap and a prodigious rubbing, he came out with his skin on, to be sure, but so excessively red all over that Fred made a conundrum immediately.

"Gam," said he, "why are you like a lobster?"

"Lobster?" the blacksmith repeated, rubbing his arms dry with a rough brown towel; "why, I a'n't good to eat; and I a'n't got as many legs; and I hav'n't got pop-eyes, have I?"

"It's because you go into hot water so very black and come out so very red."

Gam chuckled, and the old lady said, "Look here, you're a pretty fellow to be making fun of my big boy! You're such a little shrimp, that he'll button you up in his pocket and carry you off to his forge, if you don't take care."

“Just where I’d like to go,” retorted Fred, “only mamma says I must wait for papa to take me, for fear I should get into mischief. I begged her to let me go alone, but I might as well ask permission to go without my eyes, ears, and elbows. When mamma once says ‘no,’ I tell you what, she means it.”

At this moment a rumbling noise was heard. Fred listened so intently, with his eyes fixed on the road, that he looked very much like a cat watching a bird in a tree.

The noise grew louder, and all at once a great clattering stage-coach dashed round the corner and up the street; the driver, as it passed, flinging something that fell with a “dump” against the door.

Down sprang Fred from the barrel,—out he ran, and before the old lady could find her shoes he came back, dragging the battered old leather letter-bag which held the mail.

“Here are the letters!” he shouted. “Quick, Mrs. Marble, unlock the bag! Never mind the shoes; you can walk as well without them as with them—or better.”

“Look here, young old fellow, you’re in too much of a hurry,” said Mrs. Marble. “If you were to tumble into the sea, you’d choose the place where you had not even a bottom to go to.”

But she dived into her pocket as she was speaking, found the duplicate key, unlocked the bag, and poured out about ten letters on the counter; for letters were scarce articles in that little old-fashioned village.

“This is it! I know it is!” almost screamed Fred, seizing on a thick envelope. “Yes,—‘Mr. Frederick Blank,’”—reading the name. “Oh, how very jolly! Hurrah!”—and he danced round the old lady like a regular mad-cap.

“Look here!” she said, her fat sides shaking with laughter,—“look here; you must belong to a

military regiment, you know the goose-step so well, —why, what's the matter on you?"

"If you knew Aunt Fanny you'd dance too, at getting such a big letter from her."

"Not at all! Why, look here! there came into this town, last week, a sewing-machine, two pairs of patent leather boots, with red morocco tops, and three fiddles, and I never danced a bit, so you can't astonish me with your Aunt Fanny."

"Well, I know who I can; and I'm going straight to do it. So, good-bye, and success to your old shoes;" and he darted away.

She had just taken up her knitting, but upon hearing this saucy speech she made after him, laughing, tumbling, and shuffling along like an old woman tied up in a sack; but finding that it was no use to try to catch the active little monkey, she whipped off one of the old shoes and sent it flying at him. A great dog, who had been lazily winking and dozing at the door, thought this was

an invitation for him to join the frolic,—so he dashed after the shoe, seized and worried it, as if he was pretending it was a cat, made a great circle all round Fred, and then rushed back to his mistress, who had stood with the toes of the foot with no shoe resting on the instep of the other, leaning against a tree, her face perfectly scarlet with laughter.

Then she went back, sorted out the rest of the letters, and placed them in little square wooden pigeon-holes fastened in the window, and once more kicking off the old shoes, took up her knitting, telling Gam that it did her good to have “that there boy come in the store; he was so mighty ‘cute.’”*

* “‘Cute” is the Yankee word for *clever*.

PART III.

THE CHILDREN AT THE FARM-HOUSE.

THERE was no danger of the children dying of learning at the farm-house. All the school-books had been left in the city, to their extreme delight ; and they had come out here to frolic and romp, and laugh and grow fat,—which, of course, were only other names for perfect happiness. Don't you think they had excellent parents, to lock up the books? I do. There's a time for everything ; and this was *play*-time.

If the farmer's wife hadn't been a perfect darling of an old soul, I do think she must have gone distracted with all the racket. What a life she did lead ! She said, " My sirs !" and " Well, I never !" about a hundred and fifty times a day, and de-

clared that she felt as if she were just on the point of being blown up with gunpowder the whole blessed time; though she enjoyed their pranks, and loved them, and made them no end of short-cake rabbits and babies—which they ate faster than any cannibal.

Such fun as they had in the old garret! They turned somersets on the spare mattresses; they hid behind the great trunks, which seemed to have been put there on purpose; they tried on all the queer old hats and coats which they found in the trunks; and once Peter ventured down into the kitchen dressed in a direful old white coat, with a pillow stuffed in before, to make it “stick out good,” he said, and a broad-brimmed white hat, which came down to his nose. He marched gravely in and frightened the farmer’s wife nearly into fits—for she thought it was the ghost of her grandfather; but when she caught sight of Peter’s comical little phiz, she burst out laughing, and sat

down with her hands all flour, and said, "My sirs!" and "Well, I never!" a dozen times, without stopping to breathe.

But with all this love of fun, the children never killed butterflies, or robbed birds'-nests, or pinched or teased each other. One reason for this good conduct was, that they loved their parents so dearly that they obeyed them in the slightest as well as most important thing; and another was, that *they never forgot to say their prayers.*

But as to sitting still all day, and counting their fingers, nobody who lived with them expected that; and there wasn't a single cross, crooked-faced old bachelor, or snarling, vixenish old lady within a mile of the house. So these young imps raced about the live-long day, to the perfect delight of all the dogs on the place; and it did seem as if the little birds joined in every frolic, they chased each other so often, and sang louder and sweeter than ever before.

While Fred was gone to the post-office, the rest of the children did not know what to do with themselves; they sat looking out of the window so intently that the farmer's wife, hearing no noise, thought the whole family were ill, and was quite sorry for them ;—but she changed her mind when they all gave a shout together, and flew out of the front door and down to the gate to meet Fred, who was hurrying through, waving the letter triumphantly above his head.

He had not even broken the seal, he was so generously willing to share the very first words with his sisters and Peter. Down they sat under a great elm-tree, and listened with eager delight to all Aunt Fanny's sayings and doings.

“And we are to have a nice long story in two weeks ! Oh, how enchanting !” exclaimed Kitty, as Fred finished reading.

“Hurrah !” cried Peter, and the next moment the old placeraug and echoed with their laughter and joy.

Of course an answer to this delightful letter must be sent;—and they all wrote as before, enclosing as a present a photograph of Something Short, the funny little pug-nosed dog, whose name had bothered Aunt Fanny so much the summer before.



SOMETHING SHORT.

Here it is; a most excellent likeness. They wanted very much to send the portrait of another favourite, whose name was Guess? but he *would* wag his tail and flap his ears the whole blessed time, and they could not get a likeness of him.

And now all the dogs, cats, kittens, dolls, and

short-cake babies could not keep the children from feeling impatient for the coming of the grand event of the new story. Fred went every day to the post-office for a week before Aunt Fanny had promised to send it,—not to lose a shadow of a chance that she might anticipate herself,—and many a funny talk he had with old Mrs. “Look Here,” as he called her.

At last it came ! and Mrs. Marble declared, as she dived down and shuffled on her shoes, that Fred jumped “about as high as the ceiling,” and went on saying to him, “Look here, young kangaroo ; if you break in my sugar-bar’l, it will be a mighty sweet joke, but I shall count it in the bill.”

Home went Fred with his precious prize. He was received with screams of joy, and such a bounce upon him from Peter that they twirled around like a double-headed teetotum, and ended by rolling on the grass, while the three girls clapped

their hands and danced round them nearly choking with laughter.

Then Fred springing up, dashed into the house, followed by the others, and, taking off a brown paper cover, saw such a nice little book in writing ! for the pages were neatly stitched in a dark-purple paper cover. “ Oh,” cried Fred, “ how kind Aunt Fanny is to fasten it so ! We can read it just as conveniently as printing. Come, ladies and gentlemen, take your seats.”

In the most desperate hurry the children drew chairs to the table, and Fred, standing before them, with an air of great importance, waited until they were perched upon them to suit themselves.

Then, with their eight eyes all fastened upon him,—he raised his arm, with his finger up in the air, and began,—

“ Ladies and gentlemen, I shall have the very great pleasure of reading to you to-day the true and

wonderful story of 'THE FUNNY LITTLE CHARITY BAZAAR.' ”

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—“ My little darlings out in the world, I thought you would like to read the story too, because it tells of five ‘ Good Little Hearts.’ Not perfect ones,—oh no ! there are none such !—but gentle, loving, affectionate ones.

“ And I know you are more interested when the stories are true ;—so here is this one quite true, and sent to you with a loving kiss from

“ Your old friend,

“ AUNT FANNY.”

“ *P.S.*—Alice says,—‘ Oh, mamma, do tell the children to form clubs this next autumn and winter, to work for the poor. It is so nice and delightful to find how much children can do, if they will only try,—don’t you think they will if you ask them ?’

“ Dear little hearts ! This is a ‘ real true ’ message from a ‘ real true ’ Alice. If you would like to see her, just ask the publishers, and they will tell you where she lives.”

PART IV.

THE FUNNY LITTLE CHARITY BAZAAR.



CHAPTER I.

ALICE.

“MAMMA, I’m invited to a Fair,”* cried Alice, one Friday afternoon after school, in May. “It’s a Fair for the poor children, and I’m to bring as many things as I can, to sell! Oh, won’t it be delightful?” and she skipped about the room, rubbing her hands together, and then darted to the top drawer of her own little bureau, to see what treasures she could spare.

* In the United States a charity bazaar is always called a Fair.

“Where is the Fair to be held?” said Alice’s mamma, who had only two children of her “very own,” to be sure, but made it up splendidly by being an “Aunt Fanny” to ever so many thousands of darling nieces and nephews.

“Oh, at Annie’s house, to-morrow afternoon! May I go? And please give me a whole lot of money to spend,—oh do, mamma!”

“Well, here are five new postal-stamp bills, each five cents.* It is paper money. Is that enough?”

“Why, mamma, how kind!” exclaimed Alice, running to kiss her. She took the money, and holding one piece up, said, as if she were learning a lesson, “Five times one are five.” She laid this down on a table, and holding up another, said, “Five times two are ten,” and so on till she got to “Five times five are twenty-five,—Twenty—five cents! Oh, thank you, thank you! I never had

* About twopence halfpenny.

so much money at once in the whole course of my existence ! I love you, and I mean to buy you a present at the Fair."

Off she skipped into her own room, with her precious little fortune, and put it very carefully in a beautiful red morocco porte-monnaie, which had "Be economical" printed in gold letters on one side,—and then she went on hunting in every corner for something which she could contribute to the Fair.

First she drew out, her eyes sparkling with pleasure, a pair of doll's stockings, which she had knitted herself, with great pride and joy, during the winter just passed. You must know that Alice was a wonderful favourite with Maria, a faithful housemaid who had lived with "Aunt Fanny" a great many years, and it was she who had taught Alice to knit the stockings. To be sure they were rather thick in the ankle, and one toe was much sharper than the other, while the seam-

stitch was sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, all up and down and round the leg,—but, “never mind! they would keep a doll’s legs just as warm,” Alice said. She had made them for Anna, her big china doll, but now she decided that they should be sold to help the poor.

Maria had given Alice a pretty green plaid-silk housewife, or needle-book, which she had bought at a Fair for orphans. As Alice had another one fastened in a beautiful Indian work-basket, a present from her Aunt Frances, her papa’s sister, she thought she could spare the green one for the bazaar. Then Sarah, her own sister, had worked a lovely wreath of blue forget-me-nots on a round bit of scarlet cloth, and had made it into a splendid pen-wiper for Alice. Of course, nobody dreamt of wiping their pens on the beautiful scarlet cloth. If they took the trouble to peep underneath, they found three or four layers of black cloth, and this was for the pen-wiping.

Presently, Alice discovered in a far corner of her drawer a little mite of a china baby, not more than two inches long. "Oh, you little honey-sweet darling!" she exclaimed; "I forgot all about you; you must be washed and dressed and sent to the Fair."

In a moment she had popped the baby into a basin of water. It sank down to the bottom, with a little pleasant chinking sound, but never cried an atom as Alice caught her up again, scrubbed her well all over with a nail-brush, and wiped her as hard as she could, on the towel,—talking so tenderly all the time,—“Don’t cry, darling; babies *must* be washed; don’t you know you are going to be sold for the poor children? I mean to ask five cents for you. Aren’t you glad?” To all of which the china baby listened and smiled, as if she was perfectly delighted at such fine prospects.

Just then Sarah came into the room, and Alice rushed up to this good sister to tell her the news

about the Fair, and show her what she intended to contribute.

“Suppose you fasten the little doll to the pen-wiper, and sell them both together. It will make a very pretty ornament,” said Sarah.

“How fasten her?” asked Alice.

“Why, first, of course, you must dress her in a white Swiss muslin frock, and a blue sash; then I will put some Spaulding’s glue on the soles of her feet, and stick her fast to the centre of the pen-wiper. She will look like a little fairy in a wreath of forget-me-nots.”

“Oh yes! lovely! Oh, mamma! oh, mamma! please give me some Swiss muslin and a tiny, tiny, little blue ribbon;—that’s a darling!”

“Why, where am I to find it?” said mamma. Then Alice put on a very comical face, and folding her hands before her, her eyes full of mischief, said, with her funny little head all on one side,—“Make an effort, *Fanny*.”

At this, her mamma and Sarah burst out laughing, for they knew she was quoting a speech she had just been reading in *Dombey and Son*; and did not dream of showing disrespect to her dear mother when she called her "Fanny." So they had a good laugh at the queer little monkey, who got the Swiss muslin and blue ribbon; and in about an hour after the mite of a doll was looking splendidly in her new dress, and standing stiff and straight in the very middle of the red pen-wiper, made fast to it by her little white feet with the Spaulding's glue,—which Alice declared was the most "stickery" stuff she ever saw; and I daresay the poor little china baby thought so too.

PART IV.



CHAPTER II.

GOING TO THE FAIR.

THE next afternoon Alice, with her money and her contributions, went off to the Grand Fair, in such great spirits that it was quite delightful only to look in her bright face. Of course, she *ran* all the way to Annie's: for who ever heard of children walking when they were going to have such a good time? If anybody imagines that children walk along, stiff, silent, and solemn, when they are going to a party, without so much as stirring their little fingers, all I can say is, with my compliments, that they don't use their eyes and ears; and I advise them to plant their eyes for potatoes, and put their ears in a corn-field.

Just as the sun was setting, Alice came racing home, exclaiming,—“ Oh, mamma, I’ve been so dreadfully happy! I’ve had such a delightful time, and I’ve spent all my money! It’s so nice to spend money just exactly as you please!”

“ Well, come, sit down and tell us all about it,” said Sarah. “ Begin at the very beginning.”

“ Yes, so I will,” she answered, tumbling down in a heap on the carpet. “ Let me see.” Here Alice ran her tongue out, and drew in a long breath,—a very inelegant habit, which I am sorry to say she and a great many little girls practise. Sarah made a nip at her tongue to catch it, and Alice, darting back and laughing, went on,—“ They had four little tables in the front parlour, —those tables, you know, which run one into another,—little bits of things. On these all the whatucallums were put, and the refreshments were on the marble-top centre-table.”

“ What are whatucallums?” said Sarah.

“Things to sell, to be sure;—and the little tables looked so nice! they were quite covered. But there was not very much of a refreshment; for there was only two cream-cakes, some hard sailor’s biscuit, two kisses, an ounce of chocolate creams, two or three cocoa-nut candies, and some oranges; and when the company came to buy, they were told that they ‘must not buy more than a cent’s* worth of refreshments a-piece, because if they did, *there would not be enough to go round.*’”

When Alice said this,—looking so sorry and serious over it,—it was just as much as her mamma and Sarah could do to keep their faces straight, for it did seem so very funny to tell people *not* to buy at a Fair.”

“And oh, mamma,” Alice went on, “they had such funny raffling! You see there were only ten of us,—four sellers and six buyers; so we all took

* A halfpenny.

chances in a lovely little looking-glass on a stand, it was a *tin* frame, you know, but we pretended it was silver,—and the chances were three cents* apiece. Then there was a pair of beautiful little painted china bottles, about as long as my little finger. One of the stoppers was lost; so we took the other stopper out, and said they were a pair of vases at a penny a chance. Then, when we had all paid, Annie thought in her own mind *which one she wanted to have the prize*—and she gave it to her; so *I* got this lovely silver-rimmed looking-glass, and Marguerite got the vases. I like that way of deciding,” said Alice, holding up the glass (which was about as big round as a watch) to admire it.

Here again Sarah and “Aunt Fanny” had hard work to keep from bursting out laughing,—this new style of raffling was so very comical; but, between you and me, I am afraid grown people some-

* Penny halfpenny.

times manage to give the prize to those they *want* to have it, though they do not do so in the open, honest way that Annie did. All the children seemed satisfied with her fashion,—particularly Alice and Marguerite, who won the prizes.

“When we got tired of buying and selling,” said Alice, “everybody rushed into the back parlour, and played games and danced, all singing as loud as we could for the music; and when we got out of breath laughing, singing, and dancing, we went back and bought something else. I got the last cream-cake just as Marguerite and Louise came up to buy it; so I gave them a bite apiece out of it, to console them; and, dear me! they took such big bites that there was only just one bite left for me.”

Here Aunt Fanny and Sarah *had* to laugh, they could not possibly keep in. Alice had put on such a regretful look about the great bites in her cream-cake.

“ And don’t you believe, mamma ! Willie, who was the only boy in the company, bought a cocoa-nut candy and offered me a bite, and I took it without looking very particularly, and afterwards I found out that *mine was the second* bite, and he had taken the *first* ! Wasn’t he impolite ? If I had known it before, I wouldn’t have touched his old cocoa-nut candy.” Here Alice made such a ridiculous face that her mamma and Sarah almost screamed with laughter at the fastidious little monkey,—although they too thought that it would have been more the very height of politeness in Willie to give a lady the *first* bite of his candy.

“ And oh ! mamma,” said Alice, “ Annie’s little brother Willie did give us *such* trouble ! He would keep taking everything he could lay his hands on, and running away with it ; we all had to watch him, and every moment some one else would call out, ‘ There ! Willie has got something else ! ’ and we would have to race after him, and catch

him, and tumble him down on the carpet to get the things away.

“ Well, at last we had all spent every bit of our money, and then we thought the Fair had better be over, although there were quite a good many things left ; but, you see, as we had no more money, what could we do ?

“ Then Julia said, ‘ Now, let’s count how much we have made.’

“ ‘ Oh, delightful !’ I cried ; ‘ let’s count all together.’ So we sat down on the carpet, just as close to each other as we could get, and everybody began to count. But oh, dear me ! it would not add up,—and there was one twenty-five cent piece of paper that bothered us so ! We counted on our fingers, but it was so many to count all at once *could* not get it right.

“ Then Annie said, ‘ Now suppose *one* counts the money ; and let her *begin* with the troublesome twenty-five cents !’

“That was good advice, mamma, for Annie counted, and we all looked on with the greatest attention. She did not make a single mistake,—at least I don’t think she did; and what do you suppose it came to?”

“Most a dollar?” guessed Sarah.

“Most a dollar!” repeated Alice, curling down her lip. “Three—dollars—and five cents!!* Wasn’t that splendid?”

“Mag—nificent!” said Sarah.

“We had such fun coming home,” Alice went on. “When we ran into the back parlour to get out hats and coats—they were all gone! and we were beginning to feel quite frightened, when Willie hollowed out, ‘I took them up into Annie’s room.’ The little mischief! So we all ran up into the third storey to get them. Then Annie said, ‘Let’s all go down-stairs in Indian file, one after the other; the shortest one first.’ So she arranged us. Ella

* About twelve shillings of English money.

went first, with her beautiful long curls, and I came last, because I am so tall. Mamma, I don't like to grow so tall;" and Alice put on quite a doleful expression.

"Well, we will tie a very heavy flat-iron on top of your head," said Sarah; "perhaps that will push you down a little."

"Oh dear, I don't believe it will; but never mind! We all marched down-stairs, and into the parlour, to take one last look at the things that were left on the tables.

"'Why!' exclaimed Annie, 'where are they?'

"The tables did not have the least little bit of a thing on them! We were perfectly astonished! And then we rushed in a body to Annie's mamma, who sat in the dining-room, to tell her; and she said she must buy several extra pairs of ears, if we all spoke at once; so then I told her that the cat, or some one, had taken our things.

"Just then we heard a kind of he, he! as if there

was somebody behind the curtain trying to keep in a laugh. We all ran to the window, pulled back the curtain, and, would you believe it? there was that dreadful Willie, with both his little pockets stuffed out like balloons,—and all—our—things—were—in them! Did you ever!

“Such work as we had to get them out of his pockets! for he kicked the whole time. Two girls held his legs, and two his arms, and we all got perfectly red in the face with laughing and struggling with him. But at last we had all our things, but not safely, for one poor little doll got her leg broken off. It was too bad, wasn’t it?

“Then we all went out of the house,—after giving Annie’s mamma the money and the things that had been left,—and walked, two and two, to Lizzie’s house. We skipped rope in the playroom a little while, and I was just coming out of the house, when we heard somebody screaming, ‘Stop! stop! Carlo! Stop! stop!’ and the next moment

a big dog rushed past, with a beautiful kite, all torn, in his mouth, and Willie dashed after him, crying and screaming. It was his kite; and such a beauty! with tassels on the corners, and all manner of things painted upon it, and a lovely long tail; but we were not sorry, mamma; that is, not so very *dreadfully* sorry, because he had teased us so, and had broken the little doll's leg."

"But, my darling, don't you know that you should return good for evil?—besides which, Willie only hid your things in play."

"Oh, I know, mamma; but it is so hard to be so good; though, really and truly, I'm sorry he lost his kite. I dare say he was angry enough with Carlo, though he was 'only in play' too. We watched the race till we saw Willie pull the kite out of Carlo's mouth. It was broken all to pieces: what a pity! And then I ran home."

"Well, what did you buy?" asked Sarah.

“Why, I took chances, you know; and I bought two pin-cushions, a round one and a square one,” answered Alice, pulling them out of her pocket. “See, aren’t they pretty? The round one is for you, mamma, and the square one is for Sarah; and Annie’s mamma gave me a likeness of Willie when he was a baby, and another one taken only last week. Would you believe, mamma, that such a dear quiet little thing could



WILLIE AS A BABY.

grow up so full of mischief? See, here they are.”



WILLIE AS A MISCHIEVOUS BOY.

Aunt Fanny and Sarah looked at the photographs, and were *almost* as much surprised as Alice that Willie should have turned out such a mischievous little *scaramouch*,—not quite as much surprised though, for Aunt Fanny is *very wise about children*.

“Is that all, dear?” asked Sarah.

“ Oh no ; I bought refreshments and a little green mat, and—and—that’s all.”

“ Why, I think you got a great deal for your money, and mamma and I must give you each a kiss for our pretty presents ; and I hope the poor children will be pleased when they hear about your Fair.”

PART IV.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT ALICE SAW AT THE GREAT FAIR.

WHEN Alice's papa came home, he was treated to a description of the funny little Fair, and Alice could hardly learn her Sunday-school lesson, she was so full of the delight of helping the poor in this way. She had been once to a Great Fair, where Sarah and her mamma had sold fancy articles at one of the beautiful stands just beside a Flower-Temple. You may be quite sure Alice did not miss a single thing at this Great Fair. One of the curious exhibitions was a tribe of North American Indians, painted in the most "awful way," as Alice said. They danced a war-dance, clapping their hands above their heads, slapping

their knees, and shrieking out the most terrific war-whoops, which made some of the children scream with fear. Then the Indians sat in a circle, and smoked "the pipe of peace," the meaning of which is, that one pipe is passed round like a contribution-box with a long handle, and each Indian in turn draws a great whiff, and blows the smoke in his neighbour's face, which they consider no doubt as the pink of politeness, but you and I would think very rude.

After watching the Indians for a while, Alice was allowed to wander around by herself, and she suddenly astonished her mamma by rushing back to her stand, her eyes sparkling, and crying out—"Oh, mamma! please give me some money! I want to buy three horse-shoes."

"Why, how did you come by a horse, I wonder?" said her mother, laughing; and how did the horse come by only three legs?"

“Oh, mamma, they are only for play ; they are such darling little things ! He makes a hundred and twenty in a minute, I believe. The gold ones are twenty cents, and the silver ten ;—please, mamma !”

And so her mother had to go with her to see these wonderful horse-shoes ; and, sure enough ! it was a little working model to show how quickly big horse-shoes could be made on a machine of suitable size. The man put into a hole, at one end of the machine, a long straight bar of metal, about an eighth of an inch wide, turned a wheel, and, presto ! any quantity of complete little horse-shoes, with a groove round each to receive the nails, kept dropping into a small trough, or box, at the other end of the machine. They were all of silver or pewter at first, but some were gilded afterwards ; and I do believe every man, woman, and child bought two or three each, and wore them fastened with narrow red-white-and-blue ribbons to their

dresses and coats; and thus, for a while, horse-shoes became the most fashionable style of breast-pin, which no doubt gratified and flattered all the horses in town.

A corner of the refreshment-room at the Great Fair was partitioned off, and called the "Normandy Table." Here four pretty young ladies served the company with delicious hot cakes, such as the peasants make in Normandy. They were dressed as Normandy peasants, in great high white caps with lappets, and little white aprons with pockets; and Alice thought they were perfectly lovely, and was sure it was the caps which made the cakes taste a great deal nicer than any she had ever eaten before. Her mamma said this was rather funny. She wanted Alice to find out if they stirred up the cakes with their caps, or what it was that made them so much better; but the little girl would not venture to ask.

Then Washington Irving's dear little house* was a great delight. Alice did wish she could have brought her dolls and played there all day with her dear friends, Lizzie, Julia, and Marguerite. To be sure, she said, her doll, Miss Ginevra Fanshawe, would scream with fright at the great owl which sat like a goblin on the top of the house outside; but after she got in, she would forget all about it, and it would be such a lovely baby-house! In short, Alice at that time could think and talk of nothing but the Great Fair, and now she was just as full of the Little Fair.

* A model of "Sunnyside," Washington Irving's beautiful home on the Hudson river, in the State of New York.

PART IV.



CHAPTER IV.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

ALICE, as you all know, is a member of the celebrated Grasshopper Club, of which I gave you an account in one of the "Popgun" books. Most of the Grasshoppers went to the same Sunday-school; and when they met the next morning in the class they could not help whispering a little bit about the nice time they had had at Annie's house. You see, my darlings, that I always tell exactly the truth about children. I never write of those who are so perfect that they *always* do right, because I don't know any such children; and I don't believe any live, in the *real* world. The very best child living is tempted to do wrong every day, and

very often the *best* child yields to temptation, for Satan's influence is very powerful in our hearts ; and it is only by constant prayer and watching that we, with the help of our Saviour, can conquer Satan at all.

So Alice and her little friends talked and laughed about the Fair on this Sunday morning until they were reprov'd by their teacher ; and then they looked ashamed, and remembered all at once that it was God's holy day.

They behaved pretty well after this, and at the end of the exercises the whole school sang this beautiful hymn, from the dear little Sunday-school singing-book, called *The Golden Chain* :—

“ Over the ocean-wave, far, far away,
There the poor heathen live, waiting for day.
Groping in ignorance, dark as the night ;
No blessed Bible to give them the light.

(*Chorus.*) Pity them, pity them, Christians at home ;
Haste with the Bread of Life, hasten and come.

“Here in this happy land, we have the light
Shining from God’s own Word, living and bright;
Shall we not send them this Bible to read?

Teachers and preachers, and all that they need?

(*Chorus.*) Pity them, pity them, Christians at home;
Haste with the Bread of Life, hasten and come.

“Then, while the mission-ships glad tidings bring,
List! as that heathen band joyfully sing:

Over the ocean-wave, oh, see them come!

Bringing the Bread of Life; guiding us Home!”

(*Chorus.*) Pity them, pity them, Christians at home;
Haste with the Bread of Life, hasten and come.”

PART IV.

CHAPTER V.

AUNT FANNY'S PLAN.

THE next afternoon Alice's mother was going out to do some shopping. As she passed the front parlour door she thought she heard some one talking, and went in to see who it was.

Two or three funny little bashful laughs greeted her, and then what she saw was really so comical that she sat down on the first chair, and laughed back in such a pleasant way, such an amused loving kind of laugh, that you may be sure there was something funny going on.

So there was,—for there were four funny little Grasshoppers* in the room. They had been round

* That is, members of the "Grasshopper Club."

to Annie's, who was ill at home, and had got the articles left from the Fair, and had spread them on three little quartette tables. Two of the monkeys had square bits of lace perched on the tops of their heads, with a bit of ribbon made into a bow on one of the corners. This was in imitation of the young ladies who wore the pretty round caps at the Great Fair. They had no money,—not a cent,*—so they had torn some white paper into bits, and were hard at work buying and selling, and making change with the greatest gravity, out of the bits of white paper. They informed Alice's mamma, when they had got over their bashfulness, that they had *one real penny*; for Maria, the housemaid, had been invited in, and Ella had sold her a cake of doll's soap for a penny.

“Doll's soap!” exclaimed Alice's mamma,—
“what sort of soap is that?”

“Oh, it's the sweetest little mite of a cake, all

* A halfpenny English money.

put up in silver paper. Really and truly, you know, it is a tiny bit, cut from a big cake, and covered with tin-foil; Annie made them. See here, Aunt Fanny,—here are ever so many more cakes; won't you please to buy some?"

"Certainly I will," she answered; and she went to Ella's little table, and bought a cake of doll's soap, a tin soldier, and a churn, in which you might make almost a thimbleful of butter,—for all of which she paid five cents,* to Ella's immense delight; then she called all the Grasshoppers around her, and made this little speech,—

"My darlings, do you really want to have a little bazaar, and give the money to the poor?"

"Oh, yes, indeed we do!" they all said.

"Well, let me tell you what to do. This whole week, all the time you can get from school, you can be making little pin-cushions, dressing dolls, knitting dolls' hoods,—those who know how,—

* Twopence halfpenny.

and Alice shall knit some coloured worsted reins. You must work like little beavers, and get as many things finished as possible; and next Saturday you can invite your little friends here to a *real* Fair. I will give you the refreshments, and I think you will have a very nice day."

"O—h, Aunt Fanny! how lovely that will be!" exclaimed all the Grasshoppers.

"But everything must be done regularly; so come here, if your mammas will permit you, for half-an-hour this evening, to elect officers."

"Elect officers? what does that mean," said Marguerite.

"Why," answered Aunt Fanny, "wouldn't you like me to be President of this Great Fair?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" cried all the children. "You be the President and we'll be the Generals,—or whatever it is."

Aunt Fanny laughed at this, and telling them not to forget to bring their work also, because

they must begin immediately, she bade them good-bye and went out.

The children waited a few minutes talking over the delightful Fair they were going to give, and arranging what work they meant to do ; then putting the things on the tables carefully into a basket, and throwing away the white paper-money, which they regretted would be of no use to the poor, they ran out to skip in the court-yard.

PART IV.



CHAPTER VI.

MAKING PREPARATIONS.

THAT evening five little eager faces sat round the table in the drawing-room. Poor Annie was so ill she could not come. Alice had already commenced her reins,* and was knitting away for dear life; Marguerite was sewing on a doll's mantilla; Addie was making a doll's dress; Julia was knitting a very useful pair of garters, with tidy cotton; while Lizzie was helping everybody in turn.

When Aunt Fanny entered, holding in her hands pen, ink, and paper, they immediately stif-

* In the United States ladies and little girls knit reins of bright coloured worsteds with little bells attached; and the boys play at horses with them.

fened up into very dignified attitudes, and looked as important as possible, for this was going to be a very serious business.

They wished her "good evening" with such gravity that she came very near laughing, but she managed to speak as gravely as they did; and as she took her seat and spread out the paper, etc., the children sat so silent that you would have thought not a quarter of a grain of laugh or chuckle could ever come out of them again.

"Now," said Aunt Fanny, "what do you intend to give this Fair for?"

"Why, to help poor little children," said little Addie, as serious as possible.

Aunt Fanny was near laughing again,—but she looked round with loving eyes at the children, whose "help" would be a "mite" indeed, but who were so earnest in giving it that a blessing would surely follow, little as it was. Then she wrote !—

“The bazaar given by five little girls, to ‘help’ poor children.—President : Aunt Fanny.”

“Now, who will be Secretary?” she asked.

“Oh, dear me,” cried Alice, “I can’t! for I never can spell the words right.”

“And I get the lines all crooked,” said Addie.

“And, oh! I make such dreadful blots!” said Marguerite,—“they *will* come.”

“So do I,” said Julia.

“Well, then, I will be Secretary,”—and Aunt Fanny wrote that down. “Now, who will be Treasurer?”

Every one of the children wanted to be Treasurer; it was so delightful, they said, to have a whole box of money for the poor; but after a little talking they agreed that Aunt Fanny would be the best Treasurer, as she could count the money without making a single mistake; and when that was all written down, their names were added as “Managers,” which was “splendid,” they said;

and when the list was made out, they all took the paper in turn, and looked at their own names as "Managers," with sparkling eyes and the greatest approval.

Then Aunt Fanny wrote on the next page that the Managers were to come to the house on Saturday morning to arrange the tables, go home for lunch, and return exactly at two o'clock, at which time the Bazaar would begin and continue until half-past five; then again in the evening, from seven to nine.

Dear me, how grand and glorious this was ! just like old people ; and the Managers drew in their breaths, and felt very nearly as old as the hills, with their great responsibilities,—which last word is made so very long, I suppose, because it means so much : but I wish, for the children's sakes, the word-maker had thought of a shorter one, for I never like to write long words in children's books.

After the business of the Fair, or Bazaar, was

settled, the Grasshoppers worked quite a long time; then they had some rosy-cheeked apples, and about fifty cakes. I suppose you think this an immense number for only four girls to eat,—for they did eat every single one; but when I tell you each cake was exactly the size of a silver shilling, you will understand that no one thought of taking a bite; they just popped a whole cake into their mouths at once, and so the fifty cakes made twelve and a half mouthfuls apiece, and were all the more delicious for being so funny and little.

After they went away, Alice sat down to learn her Bible-lesson for the next Sunday. She said she was *determined* to have it perfect, so that she could enjoy the Fair on Saturday with the greatest comfort. She did not like to have “Mr. Conscience” poking at her heart, and saying “Alice, you are a naughty girl! you don’t know your Sunday-lesson.”

So there she sits on a bench in the garden, as you see in the little picture, picking out her texts; and the soft summer wind is blowing back her hair, which she has just let down out of its net.



Good little heart! She will sleep all the sweeter for thus doing her duty!

PART IV.



CHAPTER VII.

PREPARING THE TABLES.

ALL that week the dear little girls worked every moment they could get from study and play. They had to play, of course, or they would have injured their healths. Alice's mamma always wanted her to skip rope, run, and laugh as much as possible,—and her bright rosy cheeks, and the way she could eat bread and butter, showed that she never neglected any chance for frolicking,—though I regret to say that she stumbled terribly over seven times nine and eight times seven, in the multiplication-table ; and did not spell “ privilege ” any better than an Eton boy.

At last Saturday came,—a lovely, sunny day,—

and soon after breakfast the Grasshoppers came, too, laden with parcels. Aunt Fanny had borrowed a very large flag from her kind friend Mrs. Easton, and had made a splendid curtain of it, draped back on one side, between the front and back drawing-room. The children opened their eyes very wide when they saw the flag, and gave two or three skips of delight. Then Aunt Fanny placed a card-table opposite the fireplace, taking the sofa away. She rang the bell, and told Maria, when she came up, to bring her a wide board which was used to cover the wash-tubs in the laundry. This was put on top of the card-table, and it made a very nice, long, narrow table. It then was covered with a white cloth, and more cloth was fastened so as to hang down all round, and cover it in like a counter. Then Sarah brought some rose-pink glazed muslin, and made festoons and rosettes all along the edge; and there was a beautiful counter all ready for the pretty things.

The children were enchanted. The pink rosettes were perfection ; and, all in a tremble with eagerness and hurry, Alice and Marguerite commenced to arrange the things.

For Julia, Aunt Fanny covered a smaller table in the same way, and placed it in front of the pier-glass, while by the window, near the fireplace, was put the centre-table. As this had a white marble top, it was thought nicer to leave it without a cover.

But something better was coming ! something too splendid almost to believe ; for Sarah went out a moment, and came back into the room with a large sheet of paper, on which was written “ OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.” It was touched at the corners with mucilage, and Sarah, mounting a chair, stuck it fast to the mirror above the mantelpiece. Then she and Aunt Fanny took a large damask tablecloth, and fastened it on the mantelpiece by drawing the ends round either side of the chimney and

nailing it fast with a very small tack. It hung over and down to the hearth, and on this were pinned the most remarkable curiosities, while on top of the mantelpiece and tables placed close to it were still more astonishing things.

First there was the very owl which had kept watch on top of Washington Irving's "Cockloft House" at the Great Fair. It was lent for this occasion to Aunt Fanny by her friend Mr. Bleeker, to whom it belonged. Then, on a sofa on one side of the mantelpiece was a strange-looking Mexican basket, and in it the most beautiful little gray kitten that ever was seen, with a sky-blue ribbon round its neck. I can tell you that this was a perfect darling of a curiosity, and got hugged and kissed nearly to death. Next to the Mexican basket was a Japanese bow and a dozen feathered arrows. The bow was very large, and had a long story, about nobody could tell what, printed on it, in the Japanese language. Then there was a splen-

did costume which had belonged to a Peruvian lady of high rank. The skirt was most curiously fluted from top to bottom, and a veil was with it, also fluted, which was to be worn so as to show only one eye. This strange costume had been given to Aunt Fanny many years before by the brave Commodore Kearney, who had visited almost every country in the world, and knew Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington.

On top of the mantelpiece was a very strange-looking, dark-brown earthenware teapot; two beautiful glass goblets, which looked as if they were covered with frost and snow; a pretty glass bottle, with the tiniest neck in the world, but which, nevertheless, had a bird swinging on a wreath of flowers inside of it,—and everybody had to wonder how it could possibly have got in; and many other things.

Pinned all down the front of the table-cloth were more curiosities, of which I will tell you by-

and-by. Oh! I forgot to speak of two strange-looking figures on the mantelpiece. One was an old woman, her face all wrinkles, with a pair of spectacles on her nose. The other was a handsome young woman, with great black eyes and the whitest teeth. Their heads were fastened on their shoulders with wires, and bowed politely every time you took them up. The curiosity of these was, that the faces and hands were made of *bread*, pinched into the right shape with the fingers, and done so well that they were really something astonishing.

The back drawing-room had nothing in it but the usual furniture. It was reserved for the children to play about in; while in the dining-room, at the side of the drawing-room, were the refreshments. These were on a large round table. Baskets of cake, dishes of fruit, nuts all nicely cracked, mottoes, oranges,—and in a corner near was an ice-cream freezer full of the funniest ice-cream that

ever was made. Aunt Fanny made it, and she meant it to be ever so much better than the confectioner's; but she put in so many eggs, and so much arrowroot, and such a quantity of sugar,—twice as much of everything as the receipt directed,—that it was not ice-cream at all, but a sort of very stiff frozen pudding.

But never mind! The Grasshoppers thought it most delicious, for Aunt Fanny gave them a taste all round before anybody else came in.

And now everything was ready, and it all looked beautiful. Sarah had worked very hard, and had invented a great many surprising and delightful things to be done. One was telling fortunes. She had made a perfect little bower, or cave, in one corner of the drawing-room, out of green baize, paper flowers, and some old Christmas ever-green wreaths. Then she covered a very small library step-ladder with green cloth, and set it as far into the corner as possible; before this she

made a high desk, by putting an empty candle-box on top of a small table, and covering them, table and all, with another green cloth. On the top was laid a very mysterious-looking book. It had "Book of Destiny" written on the cover, with all manner of flourishes, and the most wonderful fortunes inside,—every one of them written by this good sister to help on the Funny Little Bazaar.

The thing to decide upon now was, who should be the gipsy or sibyl, and the Grasshoppers all gathered eagerly round for her to choose.

"Oh, take me!" entreated Addie, the youngest and smallest.

"But can you read writing?" asked Sarah.

"Oh, yes, all but the very *longest* words. When I come to a real hard word, I'll make them read it for themselves. Ah, do let me be the gipsy!"

She was such a sweet-looking little fairy girl, and would make such a lovely little gipsy, that Sarah decided to have her; and taking her hand,

she was just going up-stairs with her to dress her as a gipsy, when Addie, delighted and enchanted with her new dignity, gave a high skip in the air, and screamed out at the top of her voice, "Good glory! how glad I am!"

"Oh, oh! who *was* that?" said Aunt Fanny, coming towards her with a look of pain on her face.

"Why, it was me!" said the truthful child, but blushing deeply.

"Dear little Addie, just come with me one moment,"—and Aunt Fanny led her into the back drawing-room. No one else was there; and Aunt Fanny, putting her arm round the little girl, drew her lovingly near, and kissing her cheek, said in a kind, low tone, "Don't say that again, darling. It sounds so very badly; it is so improper for little girls, or for any one, to use such an exclamation. Promise me that you will try to break yourself of it."

“Yes, indeed I will,” said the dear little thing. “Mamma has often told me I must not say it, but somehow I keep forgetting; but I promise you after this not to say any naughty word at all, if I can possibly help it.”

With her cheeks still all flushed, and a softened, sorrowful expression in her sweet blue eyes, Addie ran back to Sarah, and the two went up-stairs.

In about fifteen minutes a bright and beautiful, but very strange-looking little figure, skipped down the stairs and bashfully entered the parlour.

In an instant every Grasshopper's mouth was puckered into a perfect round O of astonishment. They left their tables, and began dancing about the gipsy, as if they were witches come to fly away with her,—and no wonder, for Sarah had really done something astonishing.

You must know that Aunt Fanny had a great trunk, which was full as it could hold of all sorts of odd, queer things, which had been used for

years and years for tableaux, charades, and so forth ; and Sarah had dived to the very bottom of this trunk, and had put a little of everything she could find on Addie. First, she wore a high, conical-shaped hat of black plush, with a cock's feather fastened near the pointed top with an immense imitation diamond pin. Then she had on a bright salmon-coloured jacket, trimmed with swan's-down, black velvet, and gold braid. Fastened on her breast was a great black cat, made of plush, with staring eyes of shirt-buttons, and whiskers, sewed on, of bristles pulled out of the window-brush. It was a very savage-looking cat, I can tell you ! On her own pretty little yellow muslin skirt two more black cats were fastened, because, as you know, every witch or fortune-teller must have three black cats : that is always the rule, though I don't know either rhyme or reason why it should be so. And last, she had on a very singular little cloak. It was all one piece of silk,

but was in three great stripes,—one each of red, black, and yellow,—like a Dutch flag; and when I tell you that, added to all this, Addie had a fine-knit zephyr worsted half-handkerchief on her head, under the conical hat, the edge of which was bordered with handsome white lace, which fell all over her sweet rosy face, you can easily imagine what a very queer little figure she was, and how much like a witch she looked when she was perched up on her seat in her cave, with the “Book of Destiny” before her.

The witch's dress quite upset Alice, and she marched up to her mother with an imploring face, and whispered, “Mamma, will you do me a favour,—a very great favour, indeed?”

“How can I, dear, until I know what it is?”

“Well, mamma, don't you think a Normandy peasant would be a very good thing to have at this Fair? I want to be one dreadfully.”

Aunt Fanny laughed, and kissed the glowing

cheek which was now pressing against hers to help on the coaxing, and saying, "What a monkey it is!" she ran up-stairs with Alice,—and lo, and behold! in the wonderful trunk was a complete costume for a Normandy peasant. It was laced and pinned and sewed on in double-quick time; and Alice went down smoothing the pretty embroidered muslin apron, singing gleefully, and danced into the room as if she had dropped out of a picture.

More round "Os" were made by the admiring children, and a great deal of hopping and dancing was performed in honour of the Normandy peasant, who bowed and smiled, and wished with all her might she knew how to talk Norman, so that the company, when they came, would think she was a "real true" peasant.

PART IV.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FAIR BEGINS.

Two o'clock, and a ring at the front door-bell ! Out rushed the Grasshoppers to open the door, for they could not possibly wait for Maria to come, and there stood a little boy all dressed in his best, smiling and blushing.

"It's Otie !" exclaimed Alice, kissing him. "Come in, Otie, we are all ready."

"I must take my hat off first," said the dear little fellow.

Just see how polite he was ! With his hat in his hand, his face all smiles, he came in surrounded by the Grasshoppers, who immediately slipped behind their tables and began to entreat him to buy.

You must know that on Alice's birthday her Uncle Graham had presented her with a whole box of Chinese fire-crackers, besides wheels, snakes, Roman candles, and I don't know how many more fireworks. She fired crackers all day long, and when evening came she had twenty packs left. As she had saved the fireworks until night, her mamma persuaded her to keep the rest of the crackers for the next birthday, and now some of them came in splendidly to sell at the Fair.

Of course, the very first thing Otie did was to buy his pockets full of fire-crackers. Then he bought the most ridiculous little bottle of cologne-water that ever was seen. Aunt Fanny had a morocco case full of little mites of bottles, about two inches long, which had contained homœopathic medicine. These she had filled with cologne-water, and they were sold for a penny a bottle,—very cheap, too !

More rings at the bell,—and now the children began to pour in. Most of them took off their hats and jackets, so as to be comfortable, and enjoy themselves as much as possible. The funny little cologne-water bottles were all sold in the first ten minutes, and great lamentation was made because there were no more.

More rings at the bell, and in walked a dear little boy as grave as a judge,—except the twinkle in his clear blue eyes, which judges put in their pockets, because they must always look solemn and wise, like Mr. Bleeker's owl. His name was James, but everybody called him "the doctor." He was five years old. An older brother came with him,—a bright, handsome, curly-headed boy, whom everybody called "Hillie," so we will call him so too.

The very first thing the doctor did was to walk straight up to the owl, and look at him with a pleasant smile on his sweet little face; but the

cross old thing only blinked and squinted back, looking as glum as if somebody had been brushing his head-feathers the wrong way. To be sure he was very dead indeed, and his insides were nothing but sawdust and brown paper; and that may account for his acting so hatefully.

Of course the next thing the doctor did was to buy a quantity of fire-crackers, at five for a penny—which was very dear, *I* think; a pasteboard basket of flowers, which an old aunt of Aunt Fanny had made ages ago; some candy, and I don't know what besides; while Hillie bought a curious puzzle, and a wardrobe about six inches high. He had at home a pretty little white mouse with pink eyes, and Alice thought he bought the wardrobe to keep the mouse's winter clothes in; but Aunt Fanny told Alice that Hillie and another brother had built—yes, actually *built*—a very fine wooden house in his father's garden at home, and perhaps the little speck of a wardrobe was to help

furnish it,—though the house was large enough for half-a-dozen boys to play in. I believe they had tea-parties in it.

Ah ! these boys had the inestimable blessing of excellent parents, who spared neither pains nor expense to make home the happiest place in all the world for their children. To great cultivation and refinement, they added that rare quality common sense ; and thus their boys were encouraged to take off their coats if they chose, and hammer at boards ; to understand practically the science of all familiar things ; to consult with and confide in their father and mother continually ; while, at the same time, the finer accomplishments were by no means neglected ; and they were taught, both by precept and example, to exhibit a refined courtesy to all, and that true politeness—that “real kindness kindly expressed”—which to my mind is the most perfect test of a Christian gentleman or gentlewoman. No need to tell these boys to “Honour

their father and their mother." They do it with ready, earnest, loving hearts.

Owing to this sensible mode of education, that little mite of a doctor, only five years old, could explain, as well as any grandfather, the principle on which a steam-engine works; and once, I believe, he delivered a lecture on this subject at a boys' school. Oh, dear! how funny it must have been to have seen and heard him! standing on the platform, not much bigger than Tom Thumb, and saying such wise things in his sweet childish voice! I would have given all my new boots if I could have been there!

One evening at the Great Fair the little doctor had an India-rubber drawer-knob. He was playing with it at the back of the booth where his mamma was selling. Fastened by a string to one of the buttons of his coat was a cherry-coloured gas balloon; this was bobbing about his head in the most comical manner, and it was just as much

as Aunt Fanny could do to keep from bursting out laughing, while he gravely lectured about the drawer-knob.

“Now,” said he, looking up very earnestly in her face,—“now, you see you must press this very hard on the drawer to exhaust all the air underneath; the pressure of the outside air will make it stick as tight as anything! and *then* see if you can pull it up! Now, you see if you can!”

So she pressed it with all her might and main on a wooden settee on which she was sitting, and then pretended to pull until her arm nearly came out of the socket, and at last up came the knob with a “pop!” like a pea out of a popgun.

The funny little doctor never stopped jumping up and down a single moment while Aunt Fanny was pulling, and his eyes fairly danced with delight at the trouble she had to get it up, because you know this proved all about exhausting the air. Then *he* pressed the knob down, and pulled it up

with a “pop!” and said every time, “See that!” And he very kindly explained that the principle was the same in the boys’ suckers,—those round pieces of wet leather, which are fastened through the centre to a string; the air is exhausted beneath by stamping them down on the pavement, and the pressure of the outer air gives the boys very hard work in pulling them up. So now we know all about it, thanks to the little doctor.

But we must go back to the Little Bazaar. A tremendous ringing at the bell! and who do you suppose came in one after the other?—all the Popgun children! their faces beaming with pleasure.

The rooms were now quite full, and all the dear little girls and boys were very busy, buying and selling and looking at the things in the Old Curiosity Shop. In one place was pinned a little mite of a baby’s embroidered muslin body quite yellow with age,—for Aunt Fanny had worn it when she

was only two months old. Oh, it was so delightful to see the children go up to this scrap of muslin, read the inscription, and then, with their eyes sparkling, run to Aunt Fanny and exclaim,—“ Oh, Aunt Fanny, was that really your dress? I want to see you when you were a little baby! Oh, what a dear little speck you were! I loved you, Aunt Fanny!”

They were deeply interested in a bunch of strange-looking sea-weed, which Aunt Fanny had picked up from the beach at Fort Sumter, which fort is on Sullivan's Island, opposite Charleston, in South Carolina, and a mummy apple fastened near was also a great wonder.

But the black teapot which I have mentioned was the greatest wonder of all. The children tried to take the lid off, but they found it was all tight and fast,—in fact, the whole teapot, lid and all, was one piece of crockery, and yet there was water in it.

“How *did* the water get in, Aunt Fanny?” asked the children, the little doctor among them.

She turned it bottom-upwards, and there was a large hole. “Now, look,” she said, and took a pitcher of water and poured it into the hole; when she had emptied the pitcher, she turned the teapot up again, and *not a drop came out of the hole in the bottom*, while plenty of water could be poured out of the spout. It was wonderful!

“Why!” exclaimed the children, “how *can* it keep in? It must be bewitched. Who gave it to you?”

“Prince John,” said Aunt Fanny.

“Prince John?—a real, true prince?”

“Yes, a real, true prince, though he was black, and once upon a time my father’s slave.”

“Oh, Aunt Fanny, tell us about him; please do.”

“I *have* told you. Don’t you remember, in the story of ‘Massa Charles,’ in ‘Nightcaps,’ how he

bought a tall, handsome black boy, the son of an African king, who had been kidnapped, torn from his home and parents by the wicked slave-dealers, who sold him for a slave? I was a little child when Massa Charles owned him, but I loved Prince John dearly, and he loved us. When my father gave him his liberty, he went as steward in a ship going to China, and every time he returned he brought us some strange or beautiful present to show his gratitude; and this very teapot is one of the presents. I think it came from Japan; and I will give anybody a present who will find out and tell me how the water stays in when it is poured into a hole in the bottom."

You should have seen the little doctor then. He opened his eyes very wide, so as to see the teapot very plain indeed, and find out all about it in two minutes; and Hillie, his brother, bent his handsome curly head over it, poked his finger into the hole, poured out a glassful of water, for which

he had to pay a penny, and thought so very hard about it that he got quite a pucker for a moment in his broad, white forehead, while all the children looking on said, "Oh my! how strange!" But they could not understand it. I think *I* did, but I kept the secret, because, if I had told, all the curious part of the old brown teapot would have flown to the moon. I've got it yet, and if any little darling wants to see it, all they have to do is to come to my house, and I will show it to them for a kiss, and let them pour the water out for another, unless they *want to help the poor*;—then they must pay a penny, as the children at the Fair did.

When the children had looked at all the curiosities, they came into the dining-room to buy some refreshments, and kept Aunt Fanny very busy helping the ice-cream. It was just like digging, to get it out, it was so thick and stiff.

Presently little Otie came for some. In his

sweet baby-voice, he said,—“Please give me some ice-cream?”

“You must give me five cents,” said Aunt Fanny.

“Well, here is five cents.”*

So Aunt Fanny took it, put him in a chair, pinned a napkin round his neck, and sat him up to the table; then she gave him a famous big saucerful, because he was such a sweet little fellow, and Otie flourished his spoon at a great rate, and had soon scraped the saucer clean.

“Was that nice?” asked Aunt Fanny.

“Very nice,” said Otie; “and now I want my five cents.”

“But you paid that for the cream, dear, and I am going to give it to the poor children, as a present from you.”

“Oh, no!” said Otie, shaking his funny little

* Twopence halfpenny.

head, and looking sideways at her; "but I want it myself."

"Yes, but you bought the ice-cream with it."

Otie looked grave for a minute, and then he said, "Why, I gave it to you while I ate my ice-cream;—that's what I meant, don't you see?"

Aunt Fanny laughed, for she saw that the dear little fellow did not understand that he must pay for what he ate when he went to visit his friends. He had never done so before, and he had no idea of doing it now; so she kissed him, and gave him back his five cents. Then she said, "Otie, suppose you give me three cents for the poor children, —won't you?"

"To be sure I will," answered the dear little fellow; and he handed them to her in the greatest hurry, for he understood this and was very glad to do it.

Soon after, Aunt Fanny tied a little bag of candy to the chandelier by a long ribbon, so that it hung

down about breast-high to the children. Then they were blindfolded, one by one, placed six steps from the bag, turned round three times, and then had to walk straight forward and try to touch the bag. If they touched it, they won it. This was great fun, for they would step so carefully, with their right hand out, thinking they were going perfectly straight, and when they had taken six steps and the handkerchief was removed, most of them would find themselves walking into a corner, with the bag nearly behind them, and this would make the rest shout with laughter.

But the clever little doctor won a bag, for he marched straight up to it, and gave it such a good whack with his hand that it had quite a high swing in the air ; and Julia, one of the Grasshopper Club, won *two*.

Then they had their fortunes told by the witch in the Sibyl's cave, and one little girl named Allie Baby was very much put out because she was to

marry a house- and sign- painter three weeks from that time. Wasn't hers a funny, pretty name? Her mamma's name was Allie, too,—and this was the reason she was called Allie *Baby*. She is a lovely child,—the very same to whom *Funny Little Socks* is dedicated. She brought a dear little doll and some other toys to be sold, and she bought quite a quantity of things at the Fair, and was a real good friend to the poor.

And now large broken clouds began to rush across the sky, just as a sweet little girl named Daisy came in to see the Fair. The windows were open, when suddenly half-a-dozen things were whirled off the tables by quite a furious wind, and a sharp thunder-storm came dashing down, which took all the dimples out of the cheeks of the children, for half of their little friends were yet to come. They said, "Oh! what a pity!" a great many times, but the rain did not stop for *all* of them put together, and little Daisy's nurse was

sent for her, and the rest had to run home between the showery drops, promising to come back in the evening, if they possibly could.

It kept raining by fits and starts, and only a few came. But, luckily, Sarah had told some young gentlemen she knew about the comical Little Bazaar, and as they were made of neither salt nor sugar, they never minded the rain an atom, but came, and bought a great many things, and had their fortunes told, like good fellows. One of them was so astonished at the old brown teapot, that he offered Aunt Fanny ten dollars, which is two pounds, if she would let him *break* it, to see how it was made to hold the water with such a great hole in the bottom, but she said, "No, I thank you;" and made him pay tenpence for the privilege of pouring some of the water out of the spout.

Another young gentleman gave Sarah such a funny *carte-de-visite* of a cat! He bought it of

Alice. It had been given her to sell by Lizzie's brother. It was a white cat *laughing* in the most ridiculous manner, and yet it looked so malicious and wicked too. On it was this inscription: "Ha, ha, ha! I've ate the canary."

"Oh, the little wretch!" exclaimed Aunt Fanny, and wanted Sarah to throw it away; but she said she would put it in her album, to show how cruel and wicked cats could be. Then the young gentleman said he was so afraid

she would tell everybody it was a likeness of him, that he would draw her a portrait of himself when he was a "very good and beautiful little boy;" and he drew her this.



Oh, how the children laughed! They quite refused to believe that this snub-nosed little

urchin, dragging along his wooden horse, could ever have been the elegant gentleman who was sitting there. He did all he could to make them believe it, by rubbing up his hair and looking as snub-nosed as possible ; he even squatted down to make himself as short as they were, and chased them in this way all round the rooms, while they ran laughing, and screaming "It's no such thing !" till they were nearly breathless with the fun.

I believe I must tell you about one thing more, and then this story will be long enough. Sarah had a dear little round basket, about the size of a saucer, which she had converted into what is called a baby-basket. Of course, girls know exactly what this means, but I must explain it to the boys. Real little babies sometimes have a large basket nicely lined with white muslin, generally edged with lace, over pink or blue silk. All round the sides of this basket are little pockets, which are meant to hold everything a baby wants for its

toilette. So Sarah's funny little basket had pockets : in one of which were the least little mite of a comb and brush, each about an inch long ; in another, a little tiny pair of scissors ; in another, a funny little powder-box, made out of a pill-box, and a powder-puff,—for babies always have to be powdered, because it's the fashion ; while in the middle were soft white towels, each two inches square ; a fine sponge, an inch square ; and everything else her loving heart could think of to make washing and dressing pleasant to the baby, and keep her from screaming her head quite off.

Well, all this was in a basket the size of a saucer, and sitting on the top of the whole was just the sweetest darling of a china-doll you ever saw ! It was about an inch and a half long, and was dressed in white, with blue ribbons.

The doll and her basket were four shillings ; and although longing eyes had been cast on the pretty thing, no one could afford to buy her,—it was *so*

much money. So Sarah said they must all take chances for her, which they did; and to the great disappointment of the children, a young gentleman won the baby-basket with the baby.

"What am I to do with it?" he asked, holding it away from him by the tips of his fingers, as if he was afraid the baby would bite him. "I can't take care of a baby. Is this the way to hold it?" And he took the little mite up and pressed it against his breast upside-down.

"Oh, oh!" screamed the children, "You've got her upside-down! You'll kill her! Poor little thing! You've frightened her out of her wits!"

"Then I'll put her in my pocket," he said; and he began to poke the poor little baby into his vest-pocket.

"Oh, no! don't!" screamed the children. "You'll smother her; and you are pinching her so with your great thumb and fingers that you'll break her little ribs! She thinks you are

a horrible giant, and she wants to scream and kick dreadfully,—only she is so afraid of you.”

“ Well, now,” said Aunt Fanny, “ it is too cruel to torment a baby so ! I move that you present it to the smallest girl in the room.”

Immediately all the little ones tried to make themselves look as small as they could, and watched with wistful sparkling eyes to see where the baby would go. There was one little blue-eyed, flaxen-haired darling that was much smaller than the rest, and Aunt Fanny’s eyes told the young gentleman very plainly what to do. So he gave it to her with a kiss ; and it was worth five pounds to see those blue eyes soften and melt, as she tenderly took the baby in her soft little hands, and gave it a loving but very gentle squeeze against her. Then she called the rest with her face beaming with joy and importance, and let them examine and take everything out of the basket, and all held and kissed

the baby in turn, and were quite satisfied that Minnie had got it.

It was now almost ten o'clock, and the delightful bazaar must end. So Alice and Julia collected all the little boxes of money at the tables and brought them to Aunt Fanny,—for you remember she was treasurer. Then everybody—I mean every little body—kissed every little body else, and all the young gentlemen shook hands, and said they had had a delightful evening; and all the good-nights were given, and then,—The Funny Little Bazaar was over!

“Oh, what a pity,” said Alice, as she kissed her mamma before she went up to bed. “I do wish we could have another one next week! I like to be a Normandy peasant! and it makes me so happy to think I can help the poor children. Mamma, do you think it would do for me to sleep in the Normandy cap?”

“What a monkey!” exclaimed her mother,

laughing. Run up-stairs and get into bed as quick as you can,—and mind you put your fancy things quite out of sight, so you can say your prayers without thinking about them, although you should not forget to thank your Father in Heaven for having given you such a happy evening.”

Alice said she would ; for the little girl knew that “all good things” came from His hand ; and after she had undressed, she knelt down and thanked Him in her own simple way, and in five minutes after was fast asleep.

PART IV.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

THE next Monday evening the Grasshoppers came in to see Aunt Fanny, and hear how much money had been made. I really do not think five Members of Parliament could have put on faces of more importance. They were perfectly convinced that laughing and jumping would be quite out of place on such a very serious occasion, and they sat round the table like five little statues,—all except the bright eye-beams, and some dimples which would not go away.

“I really do hope we have got five dollars,”* said Lizzie to Marguerite.

* About a pound.

Aunt Fanny began to count,—“ One, two, three, four, five (here they all gave a little jump of joy), *six, seven! eight!! nine!!! ten!!!! eleven!!!!!! twelve!!!!!! thirteen!!!!!! fourteen!!!!!!—fourteen dollars and twenty cents!*”*

The children sat perfectly entranced with surprise and delight! What a quantity of money to make all themselves! How it would astonish their papas and mammas when they heard of it,—and this fact was so exciting that they jumped up and treated Aunt Fanny to a grand *galop*, all round her and the table and the money; and then commenced racing after each other, laughing so loudly in their joy that Alice’s papa, who came in at the moment, said that the policeman standing outside on the pavement was quite anxious to know what all the fun was about; and the fat old lady who wore iron spectacles, and lived next door, was obliged to stuff cotton in her ears, they made such a racket.

* Not quite three pounds.

Alice knew that it was only his fun. She rushed up to him, and, with her arms round his neck, told the wonderful news of the fourteen dollars, at which he pretended to fall back and faint away; and then all the children, at a sign from Alice, commenced to bring him to, by pinching his ears, pulling his whiskers, and poking his sides. But, dear me! what a perfect faint, or *feint*, it was. (You must look in the dictionary, if you do not know the different meanings of these two words.) He never stirred so much as an eyelid, when suddenly, as they were all clustered round him, up he bounced, and seized as many as he could, and made them scream so, between laughter and nervousness, that Aunt Fanny put him in a corner for his bad conduct, and then made all the children stand in a row and count twenty in a whisper.

The next day she sent the money to the treasurer of an orphan asylum, with a note saying that it was sent by five little girls who had held a bazaar

for poor children ; and very soon after she received a receipt, printed on rose-coloured paper, and signed by “Mrs. Mary Douglas, Treasurer,”—stating that the “fourteen dollars and twenty cents were the proceeds of a bazaar held by five little girls.”

All the children read it with eyes beaming with gratification ; and Aunt Fanny promised to keep it safely for them, so that anybody who wanted to see it might apply to her.

Yes, you may all come to Edinburgh, if you like, and ask the publishers for yourselves if this little story is not quite true ? And now, here is the end of the Funny Little Charity Bazaar. How do you like it ?

END OF VOL. I.

